

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RONALD REAGAN NATIONAL
AIRPORT

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, if I had my way Ronald Reagan would not only have the key airport in Washington named after him, he'd have his face on Mt. Rushmore.

But for now, renaming the airport will do. His birthday comes in a few days, and this would be a fitting present. A few years ago, Mr. Speaker, we sent President Reagan another fitting present, passage of the line item veto, which he championed so vigorously during his administration. Why such honors for the former President? In all due respect to the current and previous occupants of the White House, Mr. Speaker, Ronald Reagan left a positive stamp on the political life of this country that even present and future presidents will never erase.

It was my great privilege, Mr. Speaker, to serve as one of Ronald Reagan's group of core congressional advisors, along with such outstanding leaders as former Congressman Bob Walker, and present Senate Majority Leader TRENT LOTT. And it was a singular honor to carry President Reagan's water on foreign affairs in the House, because it was his leadership that led to the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Empire.

His leadership was equally effective in economic policy. Recently, a survey of leading American businessmen attributed today's strong economy precisely to Reaganomics. Those businessmen made it clear that although President Clinton is the beneficiary, he is by no means the cause, of that prosperity.

And finally, Ronald Reagan set a moral tone for this country solidly rooted in traditional American virtues. His personality, his sense of humor, his ability to distill complex issues into language everyone understood, and finally, his total lack of guile and malice disarmed his critics and made us all feel good once again about being Americans.

The political landscape was littered with the bones of critics who underestimated him until the very last moment in 1989, when he climbed aboard the helicopter carrying him away from Washington for the last time. It was not the same Washington that greeted him in 1981. Ronald Reagan changed the very vocabulary of this city. And when we finally balance the budget and dig Americans out from the mountain of debt built by Ronald Reagan's critics, it will be the greatest birthday present of all.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by saying, "Mr. President—and for me Ronald Reagan will always be 'Mr. President'—I miss you, your country misses you, and we all wish you the happiest of birthdays with many returns."

IN HONOR OF ROBERT J. FROST

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like for my colleagues to stand with me today to pay tribute to Officer Robert J. Frost of New York for his bravery and selflessness.

He is already called the "Christmas Angel" by the Pareja family. He had simply made the decision to stay late at work one night, and on his usual walk home is when he noticed the strong smell of smoke. Because he followed his hunch that something was terribly wrong, he is credited with helping a family of 9 escape from their burning home. You could say it was fate that brought together Transit Officer Frost and the Pareja family. I would say, like them, that it must have been a miracle.

Gathering here today to acknowledge the heroism of Robert, reminds us to continually pay heed to the local heroes of our communities. Recognizing Robert Frost will allow us all to take stock in our actions and reflect on how we too can make a difference in our neighbor's lives. Robert did not have to run up to the burning house. He did so because he cared enough and perhaps because like all of us, he would like to believe that someone would do the same for him if he ever needed their help. Let us take this moment to thank all the Officer Frosts out there and pray that we can be fortunate enough to have an "angel" like him around. I wish Robert Frost and his family all the success in future endeavors.

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AROUND
THE WORLD

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, the euphoria that greeted the end of the cold war, and the authoritarian regimes around the world that drew their strength from it, is fading as we face the reality of how difficult it is to instill democratic ideals and processes in emerging nations. Some critics have argued that elections have not brought freedom to many of these countries. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that a new kind of authoritarian government might be preferable to an elected one.

I am not so pessimistic. In my judgment, what is useful at this point in the U.S. and international experience with democracy-building programs is to analyze which programs have proven useful in the long-term process of reforming institutions and citizens' demands on their governments. Instead of giving up on democracy, we should support the democratic leaders—in government and civil society—who will lay the foundation for reforms in their countries.

I would commend to my colleagues a January 26, 1998 Wall Street Journal article on this subject by Marc F. Plattner and Carl Gershman of the National Endowment for Democracy. The Endowment works creatively with non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and around the world to help build lasting democratic institutions that can protect fundamental freedoms. I am proud to be one of its strongest supporters.

The article follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Jan. 26, 1998]

DEMOCRACY GETS A BUM RAP

(By Marc F. Plattner and Carl Gershman)

Two recent articles—by Fareed Zakaria in Foreign Affairs and by Robert Kaplan in The Atlantic Monthly—have given voice to a growing pessimism about the global fortunes of democracy. This gloom is no more well-founded than the euphoria about democracy that prevailed just a few years ago. For serious students of democracy have always known that it is a difficult form of government to sustain: Setting up a new democracy is much easier than getting it to perform well or to endure.

Two decades ago the world had only a few dozen democracies, predominantly in Western Europe or countries populated primarily by the descendants of Western Europeans. Citizens of these countries enjoyed not only free and competitive multiparty elections but also the rule of law and the protection of individual liberties. Nearly all (India being the most notable exception) had advanced industrial economies, sizable middle classes and high literacy rates—characteristics that political scientists typically regarded as "prerequisites" of successful democracy. Meanwhile, what were then called the Second and Third Worlds were dominated by other kinds of regimes (Marxist-Leninist, military, single-party, etc.) that rejected multiparty elections.

REGIMES CRUMBLING

By the early 1990s this situation had changed dramatically, as Marxist-Leninist, military and single-party regimes crumbled and were mostly succeeded by regimes that at least aspired to be democratic. Today, well over 100 states can plausibly claim to have elected governments, including most countries in Latin America, many in the post-Communist world and a significant number in Asia and Africa.

Outside Africa, surprisingly few of these regimes have suffered outright reversions to authoritarianism. At the same time, it has become clear that many of them, even among those that hold unambiguously free and fair elections, fall short of Western standards in protecting individual liberties and adhering to the rule of law. As Larry Diamond, co-editor of the Journal of Democracy, puts it, many of the new regimes are "electoral democracies" but not "liberal democracies." Mr. Zakaria puts a more pessimistic spin on a similar diagnosis in his article, entitled "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy."

The difference is more than semantic. Calling the emerging democracies "illiberal" suggests that they constitute a new threat to freedom. In fact, compared with the old regimes, they represent a major gain for freedom, a new opening that makes possible

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